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ABSTRACT

The Nebraska LEAD Program was developed to address concerns that a gap of understanding between agricultural and other areas of Nebraska's economy could hinder the productive development of all areas. The program is designed to develop leadership through training in communication and study of state, national, and world affairs. Each year, 30 fellows are selected to participate in a two-year program which includes: 13 three-day seminars conducted on 13 Nebraska college and university campuses; a 10-day study/travel seminar to the District of Columbia, and other points in the United States; and a 3-week study/travel seminar overseas. Emphasis of the in-state seminars is on gaining a better knowledge of communication, economics, government, natural resources, the environment, art, religion, and cultural and social changes and conditions. (PRA)

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LEAD: COMMUNICATION TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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LEAD: Communication Training for Leadership Development

Since its beginning in 1981, the Nebraska LEAD program has focused on the need to better prepare men and women for leadership responsibilities throughout this agriculturally based state.

The program was undertaken to address growing concerns that a gap of understanding between agriculture and other areas of Nebraska's economy could hinder the productive development of all areas. Farmers and ranchers make up less than two percent of the population in the U.S., yet one in five jobs depends on agriculture. The disparity is less in Nebraska, but the potential for problems is still present.

Though Nebraska is one of the nation's leading agricultural states, there is a growing gap in communication and understanding between rural and urban interests

Nebraska is increasingly dependent on international markets for its agricultural products. Leaders in agriculture need to be more attuned to overseas markets and the political and economnic trade consideratons that influence export processes.

While there is a great diversity in Nebraska agriculture, the social, political and economic interests of all agricultural groups are closely related. The need to strengthen and maintain close ties between all sectors of

agriculture is imperative if agriculture is to have a voice in the future direction of the state.

The Nebraska LEAD program was developed as a way to identify upcoming leaders within agriculture and help prepare them to meet the challenges ahead.

Thirty applicants are selected each year. After eligibility is established, each candidate is personally interviewed by a screening committee. A statewide selection committee selects 30 candidates for recommendation to the Nebraska Leadership Council's board of directors.

The Nebraska LEAD program is not a course in agriculture production. It is designed to develop leadership through training in communication and study of state, national and world affairs.

The program consists of 13 three-day seminars conducted on 13 college and university campuses across Nebraska. In the first year of the two year program participants participate in a 10-day study/travel seminar to Washington, D.C. and other points in the U. S. In the second year, fellows participate in a three week study and travel seminar overseas. Participants have travelled to Africa, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, India, Russia, Central and South America, China, Japan, etc.

Emphasis of the in-state seminars is on gaining a better knowledge of communication,economics, government, natural resources, the environment, art, religion, cultural and social changes and conditions.

Each weekend training seminar on each campus has an appointed leader who plans and conducts and training seminar. The first weekend session includes spouses. The fellows begin to get acquainted and participate in an orientation workshop.

The second session is a weekend devoted to helping fellows to improve their communication skills. A copy of the program planned for this year's session to be held next week is attached. This three day training program has been conducted on the Kearney State College campus since the beginning of the LEAD program. The session is entitled, "Communication through Leadership". Sessions include an interactional session on the art of presence, videos and interaction regarding the Pygmalion and Galatea effects, the importance of positioning and vision, personality style testing and practice in dealing with varying personality types, public speaking, communication participation through the printed and electronic media, and parliamentary procedure.

For the public speaking sessions, students are assigned a speech several weeks in advance of the training session. Each speeh is entitled, "Who Am I and Why Am I Here." As each speech is presented, it is video taped for future reference. Tapes are made available to participants. Students and the trainer discuss and critique each speaker.

A four hour session is devoted to working with the media, print and electonic. Fellows learn how to present

themselves on papr and on the screen.

Parliamentary procedure, with demonstrations in which participants conduct actual business for the group and discuss special problems, is included in the program.

Evaluation of the training session by participants reveals that participants feel the "Leadership Through Communication" seminar is very valuable in improvement of communiction skills and in understanding of others..

If you desire more information regarding the LEAD program or special program materials, please write or call.